

Dr. Paul C. Schattauer

Homefirst Medical Services Chicago, IL 60640-4402
4738 N. Hermitage

August 17th, 1999

1861 '99 SEP 22 10:41

Dr. Jane E. Henney
Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 14-71
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Dr. Henney,

I write to urge you to ban antibiotics as means of promoting livestock growth. As you may know, of the 50 million pounds of antibiotics produced in the U.S. every year, some 40% is given to animals, and 80% of what is given to animals is used to promote their growth.

Although antibiotics are critical in treating infectious disease, using antibiotics as a feed additive to fatten livestock more quickly is making disease-causing bacteria more resistant to the drugs humans rely upon to treat tuberculosis, pneumonia, staph infections, and other life-threatening infectious diseases. But repeated exposure to the drugs enables resistant strains of bacteria to evolve.

Indeed, physicians are finding an increasing number of cases in which antibiotics are no longer curing diseases. For example, as many as 40% of strains of streptococcus pneumoniae, a bacterium that causes pneumonia and bloodstream and ear infections, are now resistant to penicillin and other commonly used antibiotics. Patients with antibiotic-resistant infections have died. The Institute of Medicine, part of the National Academy of Sciences, estimated that the annual cost of treating antibiotic resistant infections in the U.S. is \$30 billion.

The World Health Organization called for a ban on using antibiotics to fatten livestock in 1997. Since then, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Public Health Association and other public health organizations have taken similar positions. The European Union heeded these concerns last year when it banned adding human-use antibiotics to animal feed.

Please consider a new petition to ban the use of medically useful antibiotics as growth promoters. This action would be an important step in protecting the effectiveness of drugs used to treat human diseases.

Sincerely,



Dr. Paul C. Schattauer

P.S. I've seen first hand, the effects of this problem in my office. More and more infections are becoming resistant to the antibiotics we have.

sincerely
Paul C/7/5

99A-0485